

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 FEA-01 AID-05 CEQ-01 CIAE-00
ERDA-07 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-08 EPA-04 INR-07 IO-14
L-03 NSF-02 NSC-05 NSAE-00 PM-05 USIA-15 OES-07
SS-15 SP-02 INT-05 AGRE-00 /119 W
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FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7548

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION NATO

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USEEC

USOECD

E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: SENV, CCMS, OVIP, IT

SUBJ: CURRENT ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

1. ALTHOUGH SPECIFIC ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES OCCASIONALLY BECOME SUBJECT OF POPULAR CONCERN AND/OR GOVERNMENT ATTENTION (SEE BELOW), IN GENERAL BOTH GOI AND GENERAL PUBLIC ASSIGN LOW PRIORITY TO ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES. THIS IS REFLECTED IN--AND POSSIBLY PARTIAL RESULT OF--DISPERSAL OF AUTHORITY FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES IN GOI AND ABSENCE OF EITHER CENTRAL DECISIONMAKERS OR OF ANY SORT OF OVERALL POLICY AND PLANNING. AUTHORITY FOR ENVIRONMENT DEPENDS LARGELY ON THE PARTICULAR ISSUE--MINISTRY OF HEALTH OR MINISTRY OF RESEARCH (SMALL AND UNDERFUNDED) MAY BE INVOLVED OR ELSE ONE OF SEVERAL SEMI-INDEPENDENT GOVERNMENT AGENCIES (E.G. INSTITUTE OF WATER RESEARCH, AIR POLLUTION LABORATORY).

2. THIS SITUATION HAS PREVAILED FOR SEVERAL YEARS.

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NOT SURPRISINGLY UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, THERE HAVE BEEN NO SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS OR LEADERSHIP DURING THAT PERIOD.

3. MOST IMPORTANT ENVIRONMENT ISSUE DURING PAST YEAR WAS AFTERMATH OF POLLUTION FROM CHEMICAL FACTORY AT SEVESO IN JULY 1976 (76 ROME 11893 AND SUCCEEDING MESSAGES),

WHICH CAUSED EVACUATION OF -TOWN'S INHABITANTS AND WAS FOLLOWED BY CONTINUING PROBLEMS REGARDING ASSESSMENT OF BLAME, REMEDIAL ACTION, AND MEASURES FOR PREVENTING SIMILAR OCCURRENCES IN THE FUTURE. SEVESO HAS REMAINED IN PUBLIC EYE DURING PAST YEAR AND HAS CONTRIBUTED TO NERVOUS PUBLIC REACTION TO ANY SUSPECTED INDUSTRIAL POLLUTION. GOI HAS NOT TAKEN STRONG AND EFFECTIVE LEGISLATIVE OR REGULATORY ACTION TO PREVENT FUTURE CASES OF DANGEROUS INDUSTRIAL POLLUTION. APPROVAL OF LAW ON WATER POLLUTION CONTROL IN MAY 1976 (ROME A-295, JULY 6, 1976) WAS A STEP FORWARD IN COMBATTING INDUSTRIAL POLLUTION, BUT IMPLEMENTATION HAS BEEN SLOW.

4. OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE WHICH HAS BECOME INCREASINGLY SUBJECT OF PUBLIC DEBATE, OR AT LEAST OF CONCERN TO SEGMENT OF ITALIAN POPULATION, IS GOI'S NUCLEAR POWER PROGRAM. IN PART DEBATE IS OVER SITING OF FOUR REACTORS NOW READY FOR CONSTRUCTION, AND IN PART IT IS OVER NATIONAL POLICY FOR DEVELOPMENT OF 12,000 KW NUCLEAR CAPACITY. GOI, WITH RATHER BROAD POLITICAL SUPPORT, INTENDS TO PROCEED WITH THESE PLANS.

5. TWO OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES BEAR MENTION. FIRST IS COMMUNICATION OF DISEASE. SPECIFIC ISSUES INCLUDE PUBLIC CRITICISM OF THE AUTHORITIES FOR DELAYS IN IMPLEMENTING MEASURES, ADOPTED FOUR YEARS AGO IN WAKE OF CHOLERA EPIDEMIC, TO CLEAN UP BAY OF NAPLES; CONCERN OVER POSSIBLE SPREAD OF CHOLERA FROM MIDDLE EAST TO ITALY; INSUFFICIENT QUANTITY AND PURITY

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OF WATER IN MORE ARID REGIONS OF ITALY, E.G. PUGLIA; AND RECENT OUTBREAKS OF TYPHOID FEVER AND HEPATITIS IN CENTRAL SICILY. OTHER ISSUE IS APPEARANCE OF TOXINS IN IMPORTED FROZEN AND CHILLED FISH SHIPMENTS (ROME 10932).GARDNER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
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Control Number: n/a
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Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
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Expiration:
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Retention: 0
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SAS ID: 1159665
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CURRENT ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES
TAGS: SENV, OVIP, IT, CCMS
To: STATE
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